REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the interview of January 25, 2005.

In the interview, the Examiner agreed to withdraw the restriction requirement of Claims 71-84 and examine the claims in the present application. In the Office Action, the Examiner states that the feature "downloading an evaluator onto the customer's computer so that the evaluator can examine on the customer's computer the type and/or value of the items in the set of items selected by the customer" is independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed. As discussed with the Examiner, this feature is contained in currently pending dependent claims 46, 50, 60, and 64, which were not withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner. Moreover, some of these dependent claims were in the originally filed claims, which were also not withdrawn by the Examiner.

The Examiner rejects claims 44-70 under 35 U.S.C.§103(a) as being unpatentable over Miloslavsky et al. (U.S. 6,597,685) in view of Walker (U.S. 6,088,444). According to the Examiner, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to include the value of the order and routing based at least in part on the value of the order as in Walker in the method and system of Miloslavsky and to use an applet in the architecture of Miloslavsky.

Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejection. Applicant submits that the cited art fails to teach or suggest, individually and collectively, at least the following italicized features of claims 44, 58, and 71:

> 44. A method, comprising:
> (a) providing, on a first communication channel and as part of a first contact with a customer, the first contact being a potential sales transaction with the customer, at least one web page to a web browser associated with the customer,

wherein the customer selects, for possible purchase, a set of one or more items from the provided at least one web page;

(b) receiving, from the customer and as part of the same sales transaction, a request for servicing by an agent of the contact center, wherein the servicing is to be effected by a second contact with the customer on a second communication channel different from the first communication channel;

(c) *downloading, onto a computer executing the customer's web browser, an applet;*

(d) evaluating at least one item in the set of one or more items to identify at least one of (i) *an item value* and (ii) item type in the set, *wherein step(d) is performed by the applet when the applet is being executed by the customer's computer*; and

(e) *routing the request of the customer to an agent in the contact center, the agent being selected based, at least in part, on the identified at least one of (i) item value and (ii) item type, wherein the set of one or more items is a shopping cart, wish cart, and/or wish list.*

58.   A system, comprising:

a server operable (a) to provide, on a first communication channel and as part of a first contact and a potential sales transaction with a customer, at least one web page to a web browser associated with the customer, wherein the customer selects, for possible acquisition, a set of one or more items from the provided at least one web page; and (b) receive, from the customer and as part of the same sales transaction, a request for servicing by an agent of the contact center, wherein the servicing is to be effected by a second contact with the customer on a second communication channel different from the first communication channel;

an evaluator operable to evaluate at least one item in the set of one or more items to identify at least one of (i) *an item value* and (ii) item type in the set; and

a router operable to route the request of the customer to an agent in the contact center, the agent being selected based, at least in part, on the identified at least one of (i) item value and (ii) item type, wherein the server is operable (c) to effect downloading, onto a computer executing the customer's web browser, an applet and wherein the applet comprises the evaluator.

71.   A method for routing contacts in an E-commerce contact center, comprising:

(a) providing, on a first communication channel and as part of a potential sales transaction with a customer, at least one web page to a web browser associated with the customer, wherein the customer selects, for possible purchase, a set of one or more items from the provided at least one web page;

(b) receiving, from the customer and as part of the same sales transaction, a request for servicing by an agent of the contact center, wherein the servicing is to be effected on a second communication channel different from the first communication channel;

(c) *downloading, onto a computer executing the customer's web browser, an applet comprising an evaluator;*

(d) *the downloaded evaluator evaluating at least one item in the set of one or more items to identify at least one of (i) a value of one or more items and (ii) a type of one or more items in the set;*

(e) *receiving from the downloaded evaluator an identified at least one of (i) a value of one or more items and (ii) a type of one or more items in the set;*

(f) *routing the request of the customer to an agent in the contact center, the agent being selected based, at least in part, on the identified at least one of (i) a value of one or more items and (ii) a type of one or more items in the set.*

In one embodiment, the present invention uses the type(s) and/or value(s) of item(s) selected by a customer, as determined by an applet on the customer's computer, during a Web browsing session to route to an appropriate agent an outgoing contact with the customer on a different channel. More important contacts are thus serviced more rapidly in contrast to less important contacts, thereby enhancing the profitability of the E commerce center. As will be appreciated, the servicing contact can be in the form of a voice communication or an electronic communication, such as e-mail, fax, webform, VoIP, and voice message. The use of the type and/or value of item(s) in the collection to determine the quality and skills of the agent to service the customer and/or to prioritize the contact should curtail abandonment of high-value transactions and thereby reduce overall business losses.

Walker et al.

Walker et al. is directed to a priority call queuing system that allows the called site to exercise control over the position in a phone queue of an incoming call based on the economic value assigned to the incoming call. When the incoming call is received, an interactive voice response unit (IVR)

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interrogates the caller and determines information such as identity of the caller, quantity of items to be ordered, item numbers, catalog numbers, and other data from which an economic value of the call can be determined. (Col. 2, lines 52-57.) The economic value of a call can be based upon a total number of items ordered, a total dollar amount of the order and/or the profitability of the order and the status of the customer. (Col. 3, line 64-col. 4, line 8.) For each order, the database includes the call tracking number, the quantity of items ordered, the item numbers of the items ordered, the item price and item description, and a catalog number for each ordered item. (Col. 4, line 66-col. 5, line 13.) Thereafter, the call information is used, in conjunction with pricing and other economic data, present in a database at the called site, to assign an economic value to the call. (Col. 3, lines 46-48.) The call's position in the queue is then adjusted in a manner that is hidden from the caller, in accordance with the determined economic value. The rank positions of other calls within the queue are adjusted accordingly. (Col. 3, lines 48-63.)

Walker et al. is directed to routing of an incoming customer contact only based on order information obtained by an IVR from the customer as part of the same customer contact on the same channel. At most, Walker et al. teaches the use of item value in selecting an appropriate resource for completing an incoming current contact. It does not teach the use of an icon in a Web page to initiate a request for customer assistance coupled with product order analysis to decrease the likelihood of abandonment of the browsing session by the customer. It therefore does not teach or suggest the routing of a second contact with a customer on a second channel based on information obtained in a first contact with the customer on a first channel, particularly a Web browsing session.

To provide this teaching, the Examiner turns to Miloslavsky et al.

<u>Miloslavsky et al.</u>

Miloslavsky et al. is directed to an IP-capable call center system having a managing computer connected to a plurality of PC's at agent stations on a local area network. The managing computer is adapted to receive and route IP network telephony calls to the agent stations according to predetermined routing rules. A statistics server in the call center provides status of call center objects, among multiple status possibilities, to requesting applications in the processes of routing calls. Requesting applications, in addition to requests for object states, provide priority indications of object states desired. The statistics server provides the highest priority state to a requesting application. In the absence of a priority indication the statistics server provides status of objects according to a default indication.

Miloslavsky et al. does not teach the evaluation of one or more items selected by a customer for possible purchase to identify the value(s) and/or type(s) of at least one item in the collection and routing a different contact with the customer on a different channel to at least one working agent and/or queue based on the evaluated value(s) and/or type(s) of the item(s). At col. 12, line 2-col. 13, line 16, Miloslavsky et al. describes an E-commerce site and sales methodology. The customer can place an order by clicking on an order icon or request service by clicking on a help icon. When the "help" icon is selected by the customer, a separate telephone communication is established with the agent. The Web page and identity of the customer site are automatically provided to the servicing

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agent.   Regarding routing of the "help" request to an agent, Miloslavsky et al. states at col. 12, line

64 to col. 13, line 7) as follows:

> When button 1118 is clicked, browser 1116 sends a telephone service request to
> "phone.html" in server 1132. Server 1132 then sends the request and associated data
> (*e.g.,* the identity of the customer site 104 and the HTML document associated with
> the web page displayed on browser 1116) to a service request process (SRP) 1168.
> SRP 1168 is a software module which could run on server 1132 or on a separate data
> processing device. *SRP 1168 selects an available service agent in accordance with*
> *predetermined criteria (e.g., availability of agents, previous interaction between*
> *certain agent and customer site 1104).*

(Emphasis added.)   The reference thus teaches only traditional call center criteria, namely customer

identity, customer history and agent skills as the criteria used in the routing decision.

The Examiner countered in the interview that Miloslavsky et al. does disclose, at col. 38, lines

20-35, "the product expertise of the support person", as an agent selection criteria; however, product

expertise is used for routing incoming contacts in a different architecture. Upon a thorough review

of Miloslavsky et al., Applicant discovered that the architecture is used to route not help requests

requiring outgoing contacts to be made but incoming contacts, particularly emails in an email

processing center 6100. Processing center 6100 contains an email server 6102 connected to data

network 6104. An address "support@abccompany.com" is associated with the email server 6102.

Incoming emails may relate to all aspects of the products and services offered by ABC. Some of the

emails may contain technical questions of a product. Others may contain suggestions on improving

the products and services. In this configuration, Miloslavsky states:

> One aspect of the present invention is a system for automatically routing the e-mails
> to the most qualified and available support person. For example, a support person
> may be an expert in one product of ABC. All e-mails related to this product will be

routed to this person automatically. Further, the system can distribute the load so that
every support person receives approximately the same number of e-mails. As a result,
the problems of the prior art systems can be solved.

(Col. 36, lines 38-47.) As can be seen from the foregoing, the referenced architecture does not teach

the evaluation of one or more items selected by a customer on a web page for possible purchase to

identify the value(s) and/or type(s) of at least one item in the collection and routing a different contact

on a different channel with the customer, respecting the possible purchase transaction, to at least one

working agent and/or queue based on the value(s) and/or type(s) of the item(s).

Moreover, as conceded by the Examiner, neither Walker et al. nor Miloslavsky et al. teach

or suggest downloading of the evaluator onto the customer's computer so that the evaluator can

examine on the customer's computer the type and/or value of the items in the set of items selected

by the customer. This is a far more efficient configuration than transmitting all of the Web page

contents to the E commerce center for analysis. Although Miloslavsky et al, is directed to an E

commerce center, it does not teach the analysis of the contents of the Web page in connection with

contact routing let alone the performance of the analysis on the customer's computer. Miloslavsky

et al. simply teaches that the contents of the Web page (or the HTML document) displayed to the

customer is sent automatically to the servicing agent to be displayed on the agent's computer. (Col.

12, line 64-col. 13, line 16.)

The Examiner has further conceded that Miloslavsky et al. does not teach the use of the value

of one or more items currently associated with a contact to determine the resource to which the

contact is to be routed. (First Office Action at page 3.) In fact, by teaching the use of traditional

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call center routing criterion in routing help requests to agents Miloslavsky et al. teaches away from using either the identity of item(s) or value(s) of item(s) currently associated with a contact as a basis for selecting a resource to service the contact.

Moreover, there is motivation to combine the Walker et al. and Miloslavsky et al. references to realize the E-commerce system of the present invention. The architecture of Walker et al. describes a traditional circuit-switched telephony site in which order information is collected by an IVR and therefore provides no motivation to one of ordinary skill in the art to configure an E-commerce center in the manner claimed to curtail abandonment of high-value transactions and thereby reduce overall business losses. Walker et al. teaches the use of product order information only in routing the current contact and not a request for assistance on a separate channel associated with the current contact. In solving the problem of high Web transaction abandonment rates, one of ordinary skill in the art would thus not consider Walker et al. to be instructive in designing an E commerce site.

Accordingly, the pending claims are allowable.

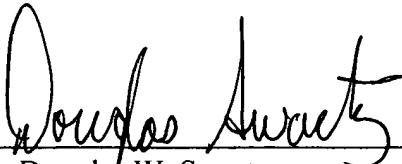The dependent claim provide further reasons for allowance.

Dependent claims 50, 64, and 77 require the results of the analysis to be contained in a cookie.

Based upon the foregoing, Applicants believe that all pending claims are in condition for allowance and such disposition is respectfully requested. In the event that a telephone conversation would further prosecution and/or expedite allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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